

Yarra River – A reminder re courtesies and rules

Introduction

There have been several courtesies (and rules) that have existed on the Yarra for rowing coaches for many years. These are based on collegiality between clubs and schools to make the Yarra a safer place to train and to improve the training quality. Over the years these have been passed on from coach to coach, by observation, conversation, or regulation. More recently, many of these have disappeared or been forgotten. This document is aimed at outlining these courtesies and why they existed with a hope to improving our collegiality and courtesy on the river.

ON WATER MATTERS:

Turning/Stopping zones.

Specific turning zones and stopping zones were introduced to aid both traffic management flow and safety. The Rowing Victoria Webpage lists these [here](#). They are not currently policed but are to be observed so that we can provide a safe rowing environment. While not always convenient these zones need to be observed to keep traffic flow and improve safety.

No Coach Boats on the Henley Course at peak training times.

Between Sunrise and 9:00am and from 4:00pm to Sunset no Coach Boats should be on the Henley course. This courtesy is to keep wash down on the main training zone for crews and minimise traffic. Clubs/schools upstream of the Henley course would drive the coach boat to the jetty on the South bank near the Cremorne Railway Bridge and then coach from a bicycle. If a coach wished to transit the Henley course, they would do so at a speed to create no wash and always maintain the max 5 knot speed limit if not with a crew. (ie; not speeding up and slowing down.)

Coach Boat etiquette on water.

- 1) It is imperative that a coach boat keeps visual and voice contact with any/all crews they are coaching.
- 2) A coach boat can only exceed 5 knots while actively coaching a crew. (ie; can't chase a crew from the city landing because the coach boat isn't organised. The crew must wait.)
- 3) A coach boat should slow to minimise wash to other rowing craft (keeping in mind points 1 and 2 above); where possible they should head in a direct line of the on coming traffic then slow down to dissipate wash more effectively. Coaches should also constantly look behind for faster crews and give way.
- 4) Coaching boats should be compliant with safety equipment. Individual PFD's must always be worn and crew PFD's stored in the boat. As the coaching boat is also the safety boat it must be fitted with a prop guard to be compliant.
- 5) Megaphones are not to be used before 7.00am Monday to Friday and before 9.00am on weekends or Public Holidays.

Rowing Lanes.

It is generally observed that in rowing on the Yarra we have one lane moving upstream (South bank) and two lanes moving downstream (Centre and North). This is different to general river rules for commercial, public travel which sees any waterway split in two. As such we need to take extra care with non-rowing users.

It is also important we support each other in the following courtesies with these lanes.

- Upstream traffic should row continuously and stay as close to the bank (starboard) as reasonably practical . Drills that block traffic due to very slow speeds should be avoided at peak times.
- Slower crews should always move to the bank (starboard) Overtaking crews should ALWAYS pass to port of the crew ahead.
- Crews rowing downstream in the centre lane must always aim to be on the north side of centre so as to not meander in a dangerous position on the southern side.

Rowing Victoria is working with Maritime Safety Victoria and Parks Victoria to place and/or enhance bridge signage along the Yarra to provide navigational support for non-rowers.

Be courteous when overtaking any vessel.

Additional diligence is required downstream from Princes Bridge as the area is extremely congested with Hire and Drive operators, ferries, and private, powered vessels.

When training further downstream from the Charles Grimes Bridge and into the docks area, it is important to maintain positioning to the starboard side of the waterway and for training fleets not to spread out across the entire river so to assist minimising congestion and ensuring a safe environment.

Currently there is a strong watching brief by MSV and Parks including from their city offices and the CCTV cameras all along Southbank!

ON LAND MATTERS:

Coaching on Land.

Please ensure that when coaching by bike, the appropriate, marked lanes are used. When stationary, please move off the bike lanes to allow others to pass.

All coaches on bikes are to wear helmets and refrain from using mobile phones while riding, which is the law. Both in conversation and or filming their crews unless it was hands free!

Megaphones should only be used in the times listed above.

Boat Trailers and Vehicles.

Trailers are only to be positioned in front of the Boathouses while actively loading/unloading boats. Once a trailer has been loaded it should be taken from the precinct. Trailers should not be left in front of the Boathouses empty or full. The loading/unloading boat trailers should not impede another clubs' ingress or egress from their shed.

These considerations need to be taken into consideration when planning to load. Clubhouses with multiple tenants should try to schedule loading/unloading as to not impede adjoining clubs.

Trailers should not be left on the roadway behind the Boathouse Drive Boathouses at any time. This is a permit only area. (NB: Exceptions would apply for short term practicality, eg; regattas or upstream pontoon issues).

The parking behind the Boathouses is a permit area only. Many people risk this early in the morning which in busy periods means permit holders do not have a place to park. Melbourne City Council have been made aware of this problem.

Schools should encourage parents to park away from the hot spots at either end of the Boathouses when dropping off or picking up their children.

Ingress/Egress.

Where possible it is in the interests of each Club to ingress/egress from directly outside their club to avoid impeding fellow clubs/crews getting on or off the water. Where you have multiple crews (at peak times) please stagger your crews so that the landing area can be shared by all.

Coach Boats on landing.

Coach Boats should not be left in a position on the landing where they impede rowing crews from ingress/egress. This may mean pulling boats well clear of the landing onto the grass or returning boats to trailers between sessions. In all instances Coach boats should not be left on the landing in front of another club. Please also do not leave trailers in the curb way in the line of walking or riding notwithstanding public cyclists are meant to ride behind the Boathouses.

Incident Reporting.

So that RV, Maritime Safety Victoria and now, the Australian Maritime Safety Authority can support the community in providing safe waterways, please register **all** incidents via the RV [Report an Incident](#) tile on the home page of the RV website.

The consistent management of reporting will assist us in ensuring we are kept safe on the water and the chances of equipment damage is mitigated.

The above points are to assist us in maintaining a safe, courteous, and enjoyable environment.

Stay Safe, Stay Rowing